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SUBJECT: GHANA'S DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DISCUSSES THE AU

REF: ACCRA 963

Classified By: AMBASSADOR PAMELA BRIDGEWATER FOR REASONS 1.4 (b) AND (d).

¶1. (C) As reported reftel, Ghana is preparing for the June 25-July 3 African Union (AU) Summit, whose focus will be planning for a "United States of Africa." In a May 3 meeting with the Ambassador, Deputy Foreign Minister Akwasi Osei-Adjei previewed the upcoming Summit. Osei-Adjei characterized the AU as a forum to promote dialogue. Ghana's main goal with the AU, he said, is to enhance security, which will in turn strengthen development. He was under no illusions that a "United States of Africa" will be formed soon, conceding that this idea is "futuristic" and "a long way away."

¶2. (C) Over the shorter term, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) could be a better mechanism to resolve transnational issues, according to Osei-Adjei. He thought the APRM could seriously impact the way African nations deal with one another. He also envisioned a tier-based development process, saying that developing state institutions was a critical initial step. Once these institutions are firmly in place and leaders are accountable, multilateral fora, such as the AU, can be more effective, according to the Deputy Minister.

¶3. (C) The Deputy Minister also said that Western countries and organizations could help the AU by providing training and/or logistics for peacekeeping forces. Again stressing security and stability priorities, Osei-Adjei highlighted the ongoing strife in Sudan and Somalia as conflicts that are draining too many lives and resources from the continent.

¶4. (C) Comment: The "United States of Africa" vision fits well with Ghana's pan-African history and African leadership aspirations. While Foreign Minister Nana Akufo-Addo has spoken frequently about this vision of African unity, we were encouraged to hear Osei-Adjei's realistic take on the future of the AU and his focus on practical issues of security and institution building. An APRM conference in Accra this week should provide a clearer understanding of how Ghana and the AU plan to use this process to tackle African challenges.
BRIDGEWATER